



Mint Edition

Newsletter of the Nevada State Museum, Carson City
Nevada Department of Tourism & Cultural Affairs

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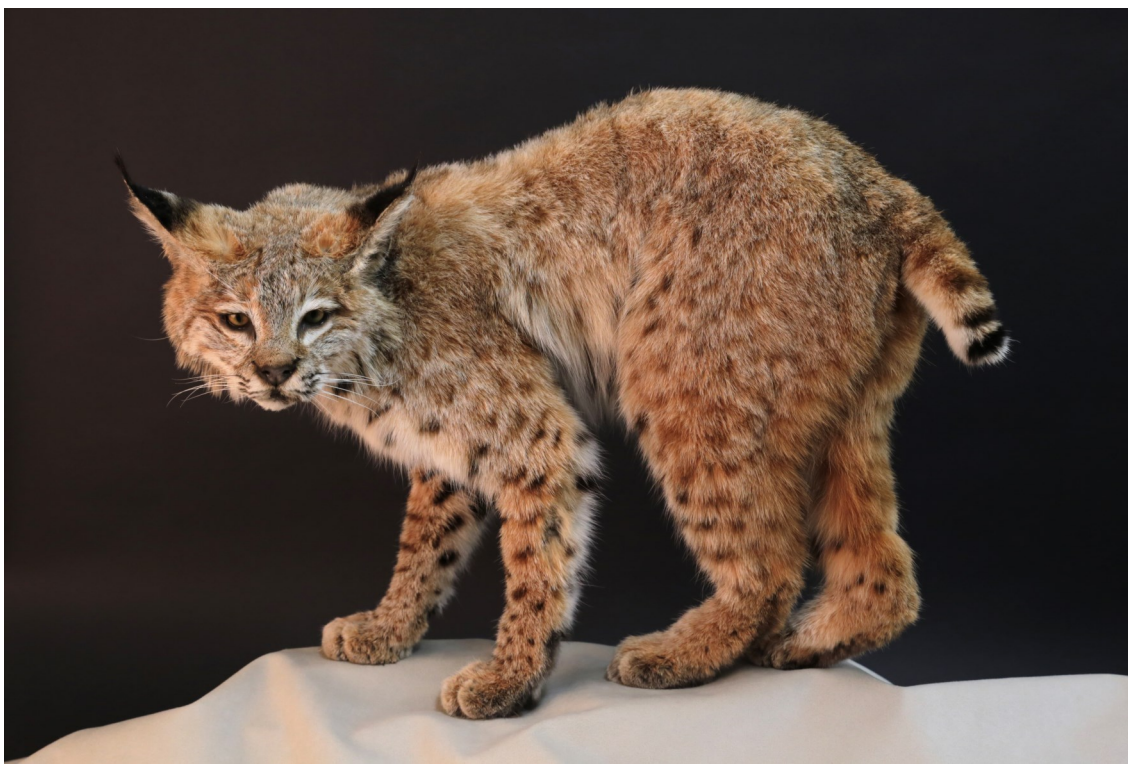
Natural History Goes Wild

by George Baumgardner, Ph.D., Curator of Natural History

The Nevada State Museum has an excellent selection of bird and mammal taxidermy mounts; however, we lack a few fairly common animals. Thanks to an increase in its budget, the Natural History program is adding several new specimens to its

holdings. This bobcat (*Felis rufus*) was donated by the Nevada Department of Wildlife and was prepared by Mr. Sean Shea of Headmaster Guide Service & Taxidermy in Reno. Mr. Shea did an excellent job on this specimen. I find its face and body pose

very expressive and believable. At least three other taxidermy mounts and four tanned skins will be added to our collection for use in education programs and future exhibits. I thank the Board of Museums & History for this increase to the budget.



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Hot New Science Program on Desert Adaptations

by Deborah Stevenson, Curator of Education

“Resident scientists” Dian Teigler and Pat King have developed a hot new science program on Desert Adaptations which will be unveiled at the next tour guide training in February. Did you know that Nevada has two deserts? The lower Mojave Desert receives most of its precipitation as rain, while the higher Great Basin Desert gets most of its moisture as snow; the Creosote Bush lives in the Mojave and Big Sagebrush dominates the Great Basin Desert. But most fascinating are the adaptations of the creatures that live there. The Kangaroo Rat, Desert Tortoise, Ground Squirrel, and Burrowing Owl all use burrows to escape the intense summer heat. The Jackrabbit’s large ears have a network of blood vessels that bring the hotter blood near the surface to be cooled; they also have hair on the bottom of their paws to protect their feet from the hot ground. Antelope Squirrels use their tails like umbrellas to shade their backs.

*Above, left to right: Cacti, Antelope Squirrel, Desert Tortoise.
Below: Ord’s Kangaroo Rat.*



Kangaroo Rats are masters of survival. They have an uncanny ability to

extract water from dry seeds! Their kidneys concentrate their urine to an almost crystal-like consistency, greatly reducing the amount of water that is lost. Kangaroo Rats don’t even need to bathe; instead, they take a dust bath by rolling around in the sand.

Plants, too, know how to stay cool. Light-colored spines and fine hairs reflect heat and reduce the air flow over the plant’s surface. Spines also shade the plant. Fine hairs on sagebrush help it stay cool.

The museum has over a dozen science programs that help kids go wild over the natural world. Learn how to unplug from your devices and get connected to the great outdoors. It’s cool!



Creativity and Innovation Spark 2015 Museum Lectures

by Deborah Stevenson, Curator of Education

The New Year invites us to let go of the past and engage more fully in the present. For me, this means making time for friends, getting out in nature, enjoying life, and expressing creativity in as many ways as possible. Our 2014 focus was exploration, celebrating the life of John C. Frémont, a man whose imagination shaped the American West. I've decided to use creativity and innovation as our theme for 2015. In times of challenge Nevadans have always come up with creative solutions to survive—even thrive. Expect to meet some Nevada authors and scholars whose original research and writing are designed to inspire discussion and free-spirited thinking. The lectures start at 6:30 pm. Here's a sneak preview of the first half of the year:



Lower left: Diana's Punchbowl, Nye County, Nevada. Above: Midway Geyser Basin, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming. Photos: Chip Carroon



January 22: *A Short History of Virginia City* by
Ron and Susan James

February 26: *Nevadans: The Spirit of the Silver State*
by Stan Paher

March 26: *Military Convoy Across the U.S. in 1919*
by Jim Bonar

April 23: *Geothermal features of Yellowstone, Iceland,
and Nevada* by Chip Carroon

May 28: *Andean Prehistory: The Archaeology of
Ancient Civilizations in Peru* by Hal Starratt

June 25: *Follow the Money: How Nevada's Comstock
Lode Built San Francisco, and So Much More*
by Gary Brechin



Ron and Susan James Present A Short History of Virginia City

Founded in 1859, Virginia City quickly became world famous for its extraordinary prosperity. Over the next two decades, the mines of “the Richest City on Earth” yielded millions in gold and silver. The newly wealthy built mansions and churches, opera houses and schools, with furniture, fashions, and entertainment imported from Europe and the Far East. Here young Samuel Clemens, reporting for the *Territorial Enterprise* in 1863, first called himself Mark Twain. At its height Virginia City was a magnet for immigrants and the world leader in technological innovations in mining.

The city’s story did not end when the Comstock Lode played out. Beginning in the 1930s, bohemian artists, literati, and tourists were intrigued by this remnant of the Old West. The leader of Manhattan’s café society, Lucius Beebe, moved here and relaunched the *Territorial Enterprise* in 1950. Television’s most popular western from 1959 to 1973, *Bonanza*, located its fictional Ponderosa



Out for a ride in a Studebaker goat wagon, 1902, Virginia City, Nevada.
Nevada State Museum, Bohall Collection.

Ranch nearby. In the summer of 1965, a handful of Bay Area musicians, including Big Brother and the Holding Company, performed at the Red Dog Saloon and launched psychedelic rock, part of the inspiration for a defining decade of youth culture.

Today it is both a National Historic Landmark District and a living community. Visitors come to enjoy its saloons and restaurants, admire its

architecture, and learn from its museums and exhibits. *A Short History of Virginia City*, newly released from the University of Nevada Press, will enhance their experience and will also be enjoyed by anyone interested in the history of Nevada, mining, and the Old West. Ron and Susan James will be available to sign books as part of their presentation at the Nevada State Museum, Thursday, January 22, 6:30 – 8:00 pm.



Tour Guides Hit the Road for Enrichment Training

Nevada State Museum tour guides are a valuable resource. During the last fiscal year, guides contributed 5,867 hours to educational programming with an in-kind value of \$117,340 (at a rate of \$20/hour). To express our gratitude for their outstanding generosity, the museum is organizing a series of enrichment trips for guides to visit nearby museums and

cultural centers. The docent exchange program allows NSM guides to tour other facilities as a group at no charge; in exchange, docents from other museums can schedule a free guided tour at NSM.

Cindy Rogers, Director of the Carson Valley Museum, was excited to hear about the proposed docent exchange and is looking for a January date to kick start the

program. Jan Loverin, Curator of the Nevada State Museum's Clothing and Textile Research Center, already agreed to give the guides a tour February 11, as part of their winter training. The Dangberg Ranch, Stewart Indian School, and 4th Ward School are also open to participating in the exchange when the weather warms up. Future trips may include the Churchill County Museum, Dayton Museum, or Fort Churchill.

"We've got some of the best tour guides in the state and I want them to stay motivated," said Deborah Stevenson, Curator of Education. "Staff members need professional development and networking opportunities and so do volunteers. This is just one small way to show our appreciation to volunteers for their generosity of time and talent."

Both new and experienced guides are strongly encouraged to attend all four days of winter training, Feb. 10-11 and 17-18. Some exciting things are on the agenda including behind the scenes tours in anthropology, a tule basket-making demonstration by Sue Ann Monteleone, *History of the Nevada State Museum, Part I and II*, plus tour guide training at the State Capitol. Contact Deborah Stevenson: d Stevenson@nevadaculture.org or 775-687-4810, ext. 237 to sign up.



Tour guides will be in for a treat at the Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile Research Center. Curator Jan Loverin gives a delightful tour.





Winter Tour Guide Training Schedule

Day 1: Tuesday, February 10, 2015

- 9:00 am: Welcome by Peter Barton, Administrator, Division of Museums & History, and Jim Bamore, Museum Director
- 9:30 am: Introductions and Education Mission by Deborah Stevenson
- 10:00 am: Break
- 10:30 am: *History of the Nevada State Museum Part 1 (1939 – 1960)* by Bob Nylen, Curator of History
- 11:30 am: *Carson City Mint* tours, including *Grandma's Trunk*
- 12:00 pm: Potluck lunch; *Safety orientation* by George Baumgardner, Safety Officer
- 1:00 pm: *History of the Nevada State Museum Part 2 (1960 – present)* by Bob Nylen
- 2:00 pm: Break
- 2:30 pm: *History tours: practice with mentors*
- 3:30 pm: Training ends for the day

Day 2: Wednesday, February 11, 2015

- 9:00 am: *Victorian Secrets*, Exploring Nevada video prelude to the textile tour
- 9:45 am: Carpool to Marjorie Russell Clothing & Textile Research Center, Arrowhead Dr.
- 10:00 am: *Tour of Textile Center* with Jan Loverin, Curator of Clothing and Textiles
- 11:30 am: Lunch on your own
- 1:00 pm: *Behind the Scenes in Anthropology* by Gene Hattori, Curator of Anthropology & staff
- 2:00 pm: *Tule basket making demonstration* by Sue Ann Monteleone, Registrar
- 3:00 pm: Training ends for the day

Day 3: Tuesday, February 17, 2015

- 9:00 am: *Funky Fungi* review by Pat King
- 10:00 am: Break
- 10:30 am: New! *Desert Adaptations* by Dian Teigler and Pat King
- 12:00 pm: Potluck
- 1:00 pm: *Fun with Fossils*: updates and practice tours
- 3:00 pm: Training ends for the day

Day 4: Wednesday, February 18, 2015

- 9:00 am: *The Capitol and the Prison* video featuring Guy Rocha/ new volunteer orientation
- 10:00 am: Break
- 10:30 am: *Virtual Tour of the Nevada State Capitol* by Ron Roberts
- 12:00 pm: Lunch on your own
- 1:30 pm: Meet at the State Capitol for small group tours with volunteer guides
- 3:00 pm: Congratulations! You have completed 21 hours of training.

To reserve your spot, contact
Deborah Stevenson:
dstevenson@nevadaculture.org
or 775/687-4810, ext. 237

NSM Awarded \$23,118 Grant by Institute of Museum and Library Services

by Rachel Malloy, Anthropology Collections Manager



Southwestern polychrome pot. NSM Anthropology Collections.

Photo: George Baumgardner

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded \$23,118.00 to the Nevada State Museum. We will use the grant funds to rehouse, inventory, and digitize our Navajo weavings and Southwestern ceramics. The data from the project will be available online in the fall of 2015.

The Reno Fiber Guild and the Carson Sierra Spinners donated \$500 each to assist with this project.

"Our grants are highly competitive. The Institute of Museum and Library Services enlists hundreds of library and museum professionals throughout the United States to review grant applications and make recommendations on projects most worthy of funding," said IMLS Director Susan H. Hildreth. "Receiving a grant from IMLS is a significant achievement, and we congratulate the Nevada State Museum, Carson City for being among the 2014 IMLS museum grantees."

IMLS museum grants support a wide variety of projects that create learning experiences, strengthen communities, improve care of collections, and provide broad public access.

"I'm so proud of the staff and volunteers who put together this winning proposal. Only a third of IMLS grants are funded," said Jim Barmore, Director of the Nevada

State Museum. "The project will enhance use of the collection in research, exhibits, and education programs for the benefit of all Nevadans."

A complete list of museum recipients is available on the IMLS website at www.imls.gov/recipients. For information about IMLS museum grant programs, see: www.imls.gov/applicants/available_grants.aspx.



The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's [123,000 libraries](#) and [35,000 museums](#). Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit www.imls.gov and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

We're getting Closer...

Construction of the Nevada State Museum's new loading dock and freight elevator is nearing completion. Project Superintendent John Giannini of West Coast Contractors expects to "hand over the keys" January 17, 2015.



Workers are finishing the final touches on the interior and exterior of the new structure, including rock work to complement that of the historic mint, as well as landscaping. We can't wait!



Families Learn Why Fungi are Funky and Fun



IF YOU GO:

WHAT: Family Fun Saturday: *Funky Fungi*

Discover fungi, amazing organisms that are neither plants nor animals. Make a cute mushroom craft to take home. All ages welcome.

WHEN: Saturday, January 10, 2015

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

No reservations needed.

ADMISSION: \$8 adults, children 17 and under & museum members are FREE.

CONTACT: Deborah Stevenson:
dstevenson@nevadaculture.org

The museum continues its popular *Explorations for Young Naturalists* via *Family Fun Saturdays: Funky Fungi*, January 10, 2015. These delightful programs meet the needs of various learning styles by offering many ways of experiencing the natural world with the senses, plus the opportunity to make an art project to take home. And it's not just for kids! Even adults without children enjoy relaxing with crafts, looking under the microscope, and interacting with docent scientists who really love helping others explore. The program runs from 10 am to noon and 1-3 pm.

Funki Fungi is a really cute program with songs and animation. Fungi (plural of fungus) are neither plants nor animals. They belong to a group

of organisms called *Mycota*.

Ecologists call them decomposers and they are super important in recycling nutrients and energy. Learn about mycorrhiza, the symbiotic relationship between soil fungi and plant roots. Did you know that fungi can produce millions of spores at a time? Slow motion videography makes the process appear magical. Lichens can be used to dye wool and some molds are used to make medicine such as penicillin. Come to the museum Saturday, January 10, to get out of the cold and into the fun.

Reminiscences of Jack

by Deborah Stevenson, Curator of Education

Jack Gibson was a charming, gentle man who had a way of making me smile. He was already in his 80s when I came on board in 2004. Jack walked and talked with a quality of liveliness—he had that certain spark. Jack liked to tell stories and I loved hearing them. It was a joy to hear Jack tell the story of how he and Marge ran off to Reno to be married in 1941. “When we walked down the courthouse steps,” he explained, “I handed her the checkbook and she’s had it ever since. I was able to retire early—because of her, you know.” I sensed that Jack both adored and respected women.

As part of my interview process for Curator of Education at NSM, I had to give a presentation for the Docent Council (now called Friends of NSM). Jack was there and made a point of coming over to me afterwards. “I’d hire you in a heartbeat!” he exclaimed. “You’ve got what it takes.” Needless to say I was grinning from ear to ear and still smile at the memory of his enthusiasm and support.

Jack came by my first day on the job. “Smart man, that Jim,” he beamed. “I’d ‘a’ hired ya too!” Jack continued to show up every day, just like a reporter, to get the “scoop.” As newsletter editor, he was always collecting stories and nagging about deadlines, but in a sweet way. He loved working his territory.

Jack also loved giving tours. He favorite exhibits were the *USS Nevada* Silver Service and the Winnemucca Chinatown. Jack got teary-eyed describing how the *Nevada* was too stubborn to be sunk and how an elderly Chinese man identified the red house in the Chinatown diorama as “the house where I grew up.” Jack had stories about nearly every aspect of Nevada history from historic courthouses to one-room schools, but there’s one thing Jack said every day that I’ll never forget. He’d come into my office and ask, “How are you?” I’d say “fine, and you?” and he’d say, “Great! You’re too young to understand, but when you get to be my age, every day you wake up is a good day.” And so it is. Thank you, Jack.



Jack and Marge Gibson with the Inyo, October 31, 1986.



Take a trip through
the Nevada State
Museum Store.

Remember, your
museum membership
gets you 15% off store
merchandise every day
(fundraising, consignment, and
NV150 items excluded).

Visit the Museum

600 North Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4004

Open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Tuesday through Sunday
Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years

Members	Free	Memberships:	\$20 senior
Children (17 & under)	Free		\$35 individual
Adults	\$ 8.00		\$60 family



www.nevadaculture.org

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The Nevada State Museum in
Carson City is an agency of the
Division of Museums and History
within the Nevada Department
of Tourism & Cultural Affairs.
The museum engages diverse
audiences in understanding and
celebrating Nevada's natural
and cultural heritage.

State of Nevada
Brian Sandoval
Governor

Nevada Department of
Tourism & Cultural Affairs
Claudia Vecchio
Department Director

Division of Museums and History
Peter Barton
Division Administrator

Nevada State Museum
Jim Barmore
Museum Director

The Friends of the Nevada State
Museum, a 501(c)(3) private
nonprofit organization, supports
the museum through volunteer
assistance, fundraising, and
advocacy. For information
contact Tina Davis-Hersey, Chair
at 775/671-2364.

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highlighting museum exhibits,
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events, and collection activities.

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Museum members receive the
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